SOCIALIST REVIEW

October-November, 1937
Volume 6 - - - No. 3

HERBERT ZAM, Editor

Official theoretical organ of the Socialist Party of the United States. Published Monthly at 21 East 17th Street, New York, N. Y. by the Socialist Party of the United States. Subscription: One Dollar and Fifty Cents a Year. Fifteen Cents a single copy.

Entered as second class matter, November 8, 1934, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

EDITORIAL BOARD: Devere Allen, Jack Altman, Anna Bercowitz, Andrew J. Biemiller, Robert Delson, David H. H. Felix, Harry W. Laidler, Margaret Lamont, Alfred Baker Lewis, Lou H. Mann, Paul Porter, Harold Siegel and Gus Tyler.

The Roosevelt Honeymoon Is Over

by David P. Berenberg

AS "recovery" moves along its traditional path, its chief beneficiaries become more and more enraged with the President. They do not concede, since they are Bourbons who never learn anything, that his New Deal measures saved their skins, and their whole economic system. The degree of "recovery" that has been attained is due, in their view of things, to the working of "material" laws. *Laissez faire* is still their god. They hold that "recovery" would be even further advanced if business were not "hampered" by the Securities Exchange Act, by the burden of relief taxes, by the large national debt, by the Corporate Profits Tax,—if, in short, the easy and simple ways of the Coolidge-Hoover era were to return.

They blame the new way of doing things, with its high taxes, and its interference with the divine right of business men to exploit the population, chiefly on the President. They are incapable of realizing that the Coolidge-Hoover days, and their ways, are gone forever. They refuse to face the fact that even they, if restored to power, would be compelled to continue the taxes, the relief program and the regulatory program. The alternative would be the collapse of the social structure.

These forces, who are, as I have already pointed out, the chief beneficiaries of whatever "recovery" there has been, did their utmost to defeat the President in 1936. They failed. For a while they were in despair. They spoke of a "honeymoon" era. They dallied with the thought of compromise. Then, out of the blue, the president handed them an issue. No honeymoon ever ended so abruptly, so completely, as that of Big Business and FDR.

When the President launched his court reform program the reactionaries had the best talking point since the inauguration of the New Deal. They made the most of it. They rang the changes on the President's attempt at "dictatorship". He was trying, they said, to make the Supreme Court subject to the executive. He was breaking the traditional system of checks and balances. He was violating the Constitution, in spirit, if not in the letter.

They appealed to mob hysteria with tearful pleas to stand by the traditions of the nation. They construed the attempt to break the Supreme Court strangle hold on legislation, as an assault on democracy. They frightened the always timid "liberals" and stampeded many of them into a defense of the court, and into opposition to the President. They broke the President's hold on Congress.

The death of Senator Robinson helped them. The deadly heat of a Washington summer helped them. The almost unanimous aid of the newspapers helped them. They beat the President. They defeated the measure. The Supreme Court, at least for the present, will be unchanged.

But it must not be assumed too easily that the reaction has won a complete victory. More people know the truth about the Supreme Court than before. More people know what it is, and what it can do. The masses that voted for FDR in 1936 have had an unprecedented opportunity to note precisely who wishes to continue the power of the court to invalidate social legislation. If the degree of social and political awareness evident in 1936 has not abated, the masses will not be greatly impressed with the arguments advanced for the preservation of the Court in its present form. On the contrary, they will be far more likely, in 1938, to defeat those who defeated the court bill.

The Supreme Court issue is not dead. More people than ever realize that the Supreme Court exercises a form of dictatorship over legislation, which even the reactionary framers of the constitution did not intend, and that no program of legislation that challenges the power of capital can pass its scrutiny. So much

has been gained.

II.

The reaction, naturally pleased with its "victory" in the court fight, now is trying to carry the war to the President. It is trying to drive a wedge between the President, and those forces within the Democratic Party that have never had much stomach for the New Deal. These include in the main, the Southern Old Guard, pseudo-liberals like Al Smith, Wheeler and Bennet Clark, and opportunists like Copeland of New York. The rift between them and the President is of long standing. It dates back to a fundamental difference in political philosophy. FDR believes that capitalism must compromise to be secure. They still live in the world of long ago, and see no reason for compromise.

The Supreme Court issue brought the split into the open. It is not yet certain that it is a split. Even in FDR's first administration there were undercover mumblings of disagreement. The present symptoms of discontent are stronger. Yet when the Democratic rebels hear from their constituents, they may come around. It is too early to predict the collapse of FDR's strength.

The reaction knows this. It has therefore cast about for another whip with which to beat the President, and to its unconcealed joy, it has found one. The Pittsburgh "Post Dispatch" discovered that Justice Hugo Black, whom Roosevelt appointed to fill the place of Justice Vandeventer, was a member of the Klu Klux Klan in 1926, that he resigned, but that he later accepted a "passport" which made him a life member of the Klan.

This was pure gold for the Liberty League. It is, of course, notorious that the reaction has, at bottom, no objection to the KKK, or to its many imitators. In the South many "captains of industry" have been members of the KKK, and have given it financial aid. In all parts of the country these secret, terroristic bodies have done yoeman service to capital in breaking strikes, and in preventing union organization.

The storm of righteous indignation, therefore, that has swept the country because Hugo Black is found to be a member of the KKK is funny, until you recall that it is a storm artificially created, and kept alive, for the sole purpose of undermining the President, and of restoring the Big Business interests to power.

It was a serious mistake on the part of Mr. Roosevelt to appoint Senator Black. He says now that he did not know that the Senator was a member of the KKK. This if true, changes the nature of the error, but makes it no less grave. He could have found the fact out. He should have found out.

It was an error in strategy. The KKK is popular among the southern whites. In the North, Catholics, Jews, Negroes, labor, and all earnest liberals and radical forces hate and despise the KKK. To them it represents the American form of fascism. Its creed of anti-catholicism, anti-semitism, hatred of the Negro, cause that hatred and contempt to be well deserved. Its methods of secrecy and violence deepen popular resentment against it.

The President's main strength has always been in the anti-Klan forces. The reaction could have found no better weapon against the President than this which has fallen into their hands.

It does not follow, of course, that the President's popularity will vanish. He has, with his customary adroitness, found a device which took the Black issue from the front page. Judge Black has taken his seat—and all is quiet, for the moment. The recent primary vote in New York City, where Senator Copeland used the Klan issue, in an effort to win anti-Roosevelt votes, gave no evidence of a decline in the President's popular strength. In both the Republican and Democratic contests, the pro-New Deal candidate won easily.

III.

The stock market has been behaving erratically. From 1935 to the spring of 1937 stock prices rose fairly steadily. Since the spring there has been a steady recession. In August and September there were three severe raids that forced prices back to the 1935 levels.

The newspapers, the so-called "investment experts" have blamed these recessions on the war situation and to an expert that is valid. Where purely domestic issues are concerned, such as railroads, another explanation is in order. It has been forthcoming. Writers in the New York Times and the Herald-Tribune, have suggested that the stock market is only a reflector of business conditions. The weakness of the market expresses a weakness in production, in sales, in demand and in employment. No such recession is visible to the naked eye, but, of course, it may actually be taking place.

Winthrop Aldrich, often a spokesman for capitalist interests, blames the stock market break on the regulation of the Exchange by the SEC, and in particular on those rules that provide for 55% margins and that make it difficult for officers of corporations from speculating in the stocks of their companies.

A much more likely explanation, and one that fits better with the deeply rooted determination of the Wall Street interests to "break" Roosevelt, is that these raids are staged. They look like deliberate manipulations to force prices down in order, if possible, to create a panic frame of mind. Since they also offer the insiders a chance to buy sound stocks at low prices, they are a particularly attractive method of "cracking down" on the President.

That the administration realizes this possibility is evidenced by its release of $300,000,000 of so-called "sterile" gold to bolster the price of government bonds. It has also issued a number of statements designed to bolster confidence.

IV.

The papers have made much of John L. Lewis' speech on Labor Day, when he rebuked the President for his recent attitude toward militant labor. They have tried

to make it appear that the President had alienated Lewis, and that he might expect FDR now to swing to the right.

This is bare faced propaganda. Lewis did speak out boldly. But he has done so before. He has learned from experience that the President must be reminded from time to time that his strength comes from the masses. To counter balance the shouts about the Court plan that emanated from the right, Lewis had to speak loudly and emphatically.

There is no rift yet. There will be a rift between the President and the CIO, only if he proceeds from words like "a plague on both your houses" to deeds. Should he emasculate the Wagner Act, sabotage the social relief program, and permit the local police a free hand in smashing strikes, a rift will follow.

But such a retreat from the New Deal is unthinkable. FDR knows that his strength lies with the masses.

V.

The President is a political showman of the first order. Recently he has found the current running against him. The Black case, the stock market slump and the rise of a section of opinion against the Supreme Court change called for a counter-move. It was forthcoming in the trip to the west, which had been planned earlier, but which the President utilized to demonstrate that his hold on the masses is undiminished, and in the Chicago speech on war.

Pacifists and "liberals" liked the Chicago speech because it was full of resounding phrases about peace. The west coast liked the speech because it was a stab at Japan. It was well received in the East because it embodied popular condemnation of fascist dictatorships. Only a few voices were raised in protest and in criticism, and these came largely from discredited sections of the population—bankers, brokers and the like who felt that the President was asking for trouble.

The speech achieved its objectives. The Black issue is forgotten. The "liberals" and pacifists are reconciled to the administration. And since, for there will be no war, no great harm is done.

No harm, that is, except in so far as the moves that have followed the speech play directly into the hands of Japan. The signatories to the Nine Power Pact are scheduled to meet in Belgium. Japan will appear, and will there claim all she has conquered in China as a reward for a cessation of hostilities for the sake of "peace". The Nine Power conference will offer Japan a compromise she can accept. So "peace" will be made. The President will, perhaps, have qualified for the Nobel Prize. But Japan will have grown greater. And a major war will have become the more certain.

But a war to be fought by the next generation is a small price to pay for the restoration of a political reputation.

VI.

In one of his fire-side chats the President announced the calling of a special session of Congress for November 15 to consider a wage-and-hour bill, reorganization of government bureaus, and regional development of power and conservation projects. He said nothing about the Supreme Court, and uttered only a few generalities about the international situation.

It is difficult to see how a special session could have been avoided. It is, however, interesting and significant to note that it is being called to repair the damage caused by the bungling of the Court bill. No new program is offered. The New Deal does not advance. At best it is attempting to consolidate its gains. That is the first marked step of its recession.

There is talk of a new party, but not of a labor party. The KKK issue, recently injected into politics by the appointment of Senator Black to the Supreme Court, makes the formation of a new "Liberal" party more likely. Roosevelt may have to discard the South and turn to the North and the West for his strength.

Those who believe that the party now in process of formation will be a "labor party" capable of transformation into a "Socialist" party will do well to study its probable composition. It will be made up of Southern tenant-farmers, city workers, middle class storekeepers, professional people, "liberals" of the type of Heywood Broun and Oswald Garrison Villard, Stalinist Communists, Governor Earle of Pennsylvania, and careerist politicians of the Jim Farley and La Guardia type. Such a party may be historically inevitable, but it is no bridge to Socialism.

It is a bitter sort of pleasure for a Socialist to watch the unfolding of the Roosevelt drama. What the President is trying to do is so obviously futile. Capital will not limit itself. It will not submit to limitations from without. Defeated at one point (as in the New Deal Congresses) it falls back on the Supreme Court which invalidates the obnoxious regulatory laws. If the President attempts to rob capital of this defense, the full force of its anger is loosed upon him. As matters stand now, capital is victorious.

As yet, the President has not surrendered. He still thinks he can bring about a New Deal, with justice for all, including the "forgotten man". What measures he contemplates now, few know. Whatever they may be, they will be opposed. In the end capital will destroy him and his work, or resort to fascism.

To a Socialist, this process of valiant effort and persistent defeat is tragic, but it is of tremendous significance.

FDR is a tragic figure, in spite of his smile and his optimism. He does not know, even now, what forces he is fighting. He has caught a glimpse of their sinister strength, he has felt their weapons, but, and this is his tragedy and ours, he is himself one of those whom he is fighting. His allegiance is and must be divided, and so he is doomed to defeat.

And all those who rely on him are doomed to defeat with him—all those who imagine that they will share in the "more abundant life" by following him.

WAR OR PEACE FOR LABOR

by Frank N. Trager

I.

WILLIAM GREEN opened the Denver convention of the American Federation of Labor as follows:

> "True to the traditional policies pursued by the A. F. of L., this great 57th Annual convention will not be found wanting. It will measure up and maintain the high standard set by the 56 preceding conventions . . . Rugged, courageous men, unafraid, we meet our common problems ably, and here in this open forum of debate we will settle our questions in an orderly way, and whatever difference of opinion may exist, when debate is closed and the end of the chapter is reached and we march back to our homes, we will go out a united body, *determined to meet our common foe.*" (Italics mine—F.N.T.)

To all those concerned with the problems and destiny of labor the record of that convention is available. In it we seek the "common foe." For we, too, are determined, not merely to meet, but to vanquish that foe. We have learned from bitter experience, we have learned even from the preamble to the Constitution of the A.F. of L. written at the beginning of its life on the American scene that that "foe" is the entrenched *class* which profits out of our labor, collects interests from savings sweated out of our bodies, demands rents from the houses, slums and otherwise, which we built for shelter.

As we examine the record of that convention, as we carefully read the rest of Green's opening statement, adopted in resolution form during the deliberations of the convention, where do we find the "common foe"?

There is condemnation of fascism, German and Italian brands, but as usual the chief attack is leveled against communism, called the "common enemy". From employers as a group, Green seeks "cooperation"; but the sit-down technique, used with so much effectiveness, even if occasionally overdone, is likened to an invitation to fascism. War, of course, is condemned; actually a boycott of Japanese goods is recommended; "strict neutrality" is extolled at the same time and contradictorily the United States is urged to act in concert with "peace-loving nations" to prevent *"unjustified aggression"*. (What *justifies* an aggression is left unsaid.) But on Spain the convention is curiously silent. There fascist aggression against a sovereign republic, to say nothing of the working class fight for working class freedom, is unchallenged. Is it unfair to ask how much did the ancient A. F. of L. grudge against the "yellow peril" prompt the alacrity with which it declared a boycott? And when will it declare a boycott against Italian goods? And when will it use its undoubted power to prevent shipment of goods to and the unloading of goods from fascist and other war-making imperialist countries?

Still searching for the "common enemy" we find that just prior to the opening of the convention, Green had taken some pains to deny the class character of labor, and especially to condemn any tendency toward what he called the "independent labor party fallacy". As Green continued in his convention address, using many of the sentiments already expressed at the vicious pre-convention sessions of the Building and Metal Trades Departments, we finally learned that the chief "enemy", the "common foe" allied with communism, was the Committee for Industrial Organization. Said Mr. Green:

> "Our patient, long-suffering, hopeful group of organized workers and their representatives will now change from a position of watchful waiting and earnest appeal to the greatest fighting machine that was ever created within the ranks of labor.
>
> The clock has struck. The hour is here. You are here to make the decision. Having appealed to them for two years to come back, you are now going to say that appeal will no longer be made.
>
> And this convention, in my judgment, particularly if it follows the recommendation of the Executive Council, will order your Board of Directors to revoke the charters of these international unions who set up this dual organization."

It thus turns out that the bold words of Green—and let there be no mistake, Green stands for an overwhelming majority of the Executive Council of the A.F. of L.—are directed against another trade union group.

In passing it should be noted that, according to Green, the issue which created the enmity within the house of labor is not industrial unionism, not organization of the unorganized, but is "one clear-cut issue, that of democratic procedure and democratic control." That the issue of democracy in the trade unions is fundamental no one will deny. It will be discussed in this article. But that this is the issue now dividing labor no one clearly familiar with the annals of the A. F. of L. will believe.

II.

While Green was thus fulminating at the opening of the 57th Convention of the A. F. of L., declaring a "relentless war" on the C.I.O., the latter began its conference, in the same city and same hotel just 23 months after its birth. It recorded its phenomenal, if not always soundly buttressed, growth from 9 to 32) international unions and 600 odd local units—with a membership four times as large as at the beginning. It, too, declared a boycott against Japanese goods but was silent about Spain. It sought sanctity of collective bargaining contracts and avoided the subject of sit-down. It welcomed political action of labor but its program for such is distinguished from that of the A. F. of L. only by its great vigor.

This element of vigor was one of the outstanding marks of the Atlantic City C.I.O. conference. It could be heard, at its best, with most significance in the two major utterances of Lewis: in his "peace" speech, and in his closing address vaguely pointing to a this-wordly

power higher than that of "corporations which control American Industry." Of all the men who spoke at Atlantic City, beyond question Lewis, domineering as ever, clearly unswayed by all but his own deepening drive for a labor world of justice, the patterns of which are still obscure to him where they are not frankly capitalist, is dramatically "top-man". *

III.

But the chief issue that arose out of the C.I.O. deliberations at Atlantic City was the surprising call for "peace" between it and the A.F. of L. Obviously to heal the schism between the two forces is an end devoutly to be worked for. But peace is not in itself an unmixed blessing. Peace between the C.I.O. and A.F. of L. which would in any way sacrifice the principle of industrial unionism would be an almost irreparable defeat for progressive labor. Peace which would protect this principle and preserve the great industrial union gains recently won, is worth while fighting for.

The terms of the resolution as originally adopted (*i.e.* calling for committees of 100) were designed to utilize the real C. I. O. strength within some of the A.F. of L. internationals in support of the C.I.O. position. As the situation worked out, however, Green won his point, *i.e.*, that the original committee of three (Harrison, Bugniazet and Woll) meet with the C.I.O. This was on October 25. On October 26 Lewis, through Murray, chairman of the C.I.O. negotiating Committee, with usual decisiveness announced the terms for peace:

Here are the C.I.O. proposals:

1. The American Federation of Labor shall declare as one of its basic policies that the organization of the workers in the mass-production, marine, public utilities, service and basic fabricating industries be effectuated only on an industrial basis.

2. There shall be created within the American Federation of Labor a department to be known as the C.I.O. All the National and International Unions and local industrial unions, now affiliated with the C.I.O., shall be affiliated with such new department. This department shall be completely autonomous, operating under its own departmental constitution and shall be directed by its own properly designated officers. This department shall have the complete and sole jurisdiction in regard to (a) the workers in the industries described in point "1" above, and also (b) any matters affecting its affiliated organizations and their members.

3. There shall be called at such time and at such place as may be agreed upon between the American Federation of Labor and the Committee for Industrial Organization a national convention which shall be attended by all of the national and international unions and local industrial unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor and the Committee for Industrial Organization. This convention shall be called for the purpose of approving the foregoing agreement and for working out the necessary rules and regulations to effectuate the same and to guarantee the fulfillment of the program.

The C.I.O. peace proposals offered a basis for agreement which organizationally would create a trade union structure similar to that of the British Trades Union Congress. Obviously the proposal was designed to permit certain negotiating compromises on point three and it left unsettled the relationships between C.I.O. unions established in fields of existing A.F. of L. internationals. The proposals as offered were not new. Actually they had been forecast by labor reporters some weeks ago as also the counter propasals of the A.F. of L.

(1) That all C.I.O. unions originally chartered by the A. F. of L. resume active affiliation with the Federation and that they be accorded all rights and privileges enjoyed by them prior to the schism.

(2) That other organizations belonging to the C.I.O. be made the subject of immediate conferences between representatives chosen by them and representatives of existing A. F. of L. unions in the same fields "for the purpose of bringing about an adjustment upon terms and conditions mutually agreeable.

(3) That, pending final adjudication of the dispute between these rival unions, the reunited body carry on an organizing campaign along both industrial and craft lines, "as circumstances and conditions may warrant."

(4) That the C.I.O. "shall be immediately dissolved.

As it was obvious that a vast gulf separated the two proposals the Peace Conference "adjourned" until November 4. The A.F. of L. counter proposals could never be accepted by the C.I.O., not even by the "peace-wing" within the C.I.O. More fencing will follow these three days of initial effort; the White House will again active-

---

* One of the best "samples" of C.I.O. growth arises out of the figures collected by the National Labor Relations Board:

Summary of N.R.L.B. Elections — October 1936 — *September* 1937.

C.I.O. Unions participated in 374 *Board elections*

	No.	*%*	*Votes*	*%*
C.I.O. Unions Won	291	80	125,000	68
C.I.O. Unions Lost	83	20	57,000	32

C.I.O. versus A. F. of L. Contests, 133 *Contests*

	No.	*%*	*Votes*	*%*
C.I.O. Won	108	80	22,600	76
A. F. of L. Won	25	20	7,000	24

C.I.O. versus Company or "Independent" Unions, 97 *Contests*

	No.	*%*	*Votes*	*%*
C.I.O. Won	60	62	39,000	57
Independents Won	37	38	29,000	43

C.I.O. Unopposed elections, 144 *Elections*

	No.	*%*	*Votes*	*%*
C.I.O. Won	123	85	68,000	77
C.I.O. Lost	21	15	20,000	23

An examination of Board Elections under the N.R.A., 1933-1935, over 400,000 workers participating, shows:

	No.	*%*
Workers voting for bona fide trade unions	191,000	47
Workers voting for company unions	208,000	51
Workers voting for no representation	8,500	2

Prepared by C.I.O. Research Department from official figures of the N.L.R.B.

ly intervene in order to insure united labor backing for Roosevelt's special session proposals. (It is probable that a legislative united front may be formed for the special session of Congress.) In the end however peace will be as far away as it was preceding the negotiations.

There remains but one chance for peace, and that a dubious one. The A. F. of L. proposals include direct reference to those unions which fall under point one. These are Automobile; ACWA; ILGWU; Flat Glass; Iron, Steel and Tin; Mine, Mill and Smelter; Oil; Rubber; UTW; Fur; Newspaper Guild and UMWA. If the A.F. of L. will permit those workers enrolled under the banner of the S.W.O.C. and T.W.O.C. to be counted as part of the old Steel and Textile unions (which is not now the case) and if the remaining ten unions can muster per capita for their reported membership, *i.e,* 400,000 auto workers, 500,000 coal workers, etc., and if with these two conditions there is added the immediate call to a new convention, then the C.I.O. might conceivably agree because on the basis of its membership and its known sympathizers within the A.F. of L. it could then democratically and by majority vote, go about carrying out its peace plans.

This analysis would be incomplete if it omitted reference to the existence among the rank and file of a peace sentiment. Socialists and all progressive unionists have advocated trade union unity on the basis of mass production, industrial organization. But socialists and all progressive trade unionists must recognize the irreconcilable conflict between the *present* A.F. of L. position and that of the C.I.O. The A.F. of L. Executive Council composed in the main of the Building and Metal Trades Departments, can not relinquish its position within the council for inevitably a setback there would mean the opening of a successful attack upon the bureaucracy within their unions.

If the C.I.O. can put its own house in order; if it can win a measure of success out of its blunders on the West Coast and temporary setback in Little Steel (Lewis has just made the first attempt to rectify the West Coast situation); if it goes forward to a militant and democratic National Convention next Spring then it is more than likely that the A.F. of L. will remain primarily the organization of the skilled "aristocrats of labor".

If in the event "peace" comes to pass on some such proposal as above indicated it will be a temporary peace during which the C.I.O. will prepare by the mass membership of the unions supporting its principles, to win control of the A.F. of L. and thus carry out its proposals. Formal organizational unity will not bury the conflict at the heart of which rests not merely a conflict of "ideas" but one which recognizes the imperative need for collective, industrial organization as the sole guarantor of union existence in the world of capitalist mass production.

OUTSTANDING—
building a Labor Party

Everywhere in America today there is talk about political developments in 1938 and 1940.

Everywhere there is talk of the possibility of a new Farmer-Labor Party.

Yet most of those who are talking of this work toward something else. Many who say "Labor Party" work for and mean a party which will line up the votes of workers for the candidates of the bosses, a Popular Front.

The SOCIALIST CALL alone is working with might and main to build a real Labor Party along class lines, with candidates who are under the discipline of labor organized into its own political party.

The work of the CALL in agitating for such a Labor Party singlehanded today, was recognized by Frank Kent, distinguished journalist, when he wrote recently:

"The Socialist Call is strongly in favor of a Labor party along the lines of the English party of that name and calls upon John L. Lewis to join the Socialists.

"On the other hand, the People's Lobby, through its executive secretary, Mr. Marsh, warns against alliance with any political party, contending that such a course ultimately will extinguish labor's rights and establish a political dictatorship.

"The Daily Worker, organ of the Communist party, is as strongly against a Labor party as the Socialist Call is for it. The Worker urges the formation of a popular front along the Tugwellian lines, which would include CIO's Non-Partisan League, the farmers and the Roosevelt Democrats.

"What The Daily Worker evidently plans is the capture of the Democratic party. 'To urge,' it says, 'John L. Lewis and Labor's Non-Partisan League to turn their backs on the Democratic party and form a new national party at this time is to urge them to break all ties with the progressive masses and leaders of the Democratic party, and to isolate the labor movement from its allies.'

"To this the Socialist Call replies that 'the Communist party, once a revolutionary organization, is now little more than Roosevelt's left hand.'

"Thus, there are three roads open to 'The American Labor Movement.' It can take the advice of the Socialist Call and form a new party; or it can follow the Daily Worker and cast its lot wholly with the Roosevelt party; or it can hold to the old A.F. of L. policy of keeping politically independent of all parties."

Workers who wish to help build a real Labor Party must subscribe to

THE SOCIALIST CALL

Official Organ Socialist Party USA

AMERICA'S LEFT WING PACE-SETTER TODAY!

Subscription:
$1 a year

Call Press, Inc.,
21 East 17 St., N.Y.C.

SOCIALIST YOUTH MARCHES FORWARD

By Al Hamilton

POLITICAL decisions made by a working class organization determine its future, its character and its activities. But a political line is not an abstraction, and often means alignment with groups in an organization that advocate one set of principles as opposed to another set of principles advocated by other groups. Thus the political orientation of the youth organization of a party is usually with or against various elements in the party.

This was true at the 1935 convention of the Y.P.S.L. and likewise was true at the 9th national convention of the League which met in Philadelphia this September.

In 1936, the League had to decide whether it was for a policy of revolutionary Socialism for the Socialist Party. The election of the National Executive Committee at the 1935 convention placed the League behind the policies of revolutionary Socialism as opposed to the reformism of the Old Guard. And this decision of 1935 was continued and reaffirmed at the 1937 convention in the light of political developments within and without the party in the period between conventions.

The Ninth National Convention had to determine whether the League was to be a Trotskyite organization, an organization supporting reformism, or a revolutionary socialist organization, supporting principles of revolutionary Socialism in the Socialist Party. The convention's political decisions aligned it with the supporters of revolutionary Socialism in the Party.

The issue between Trotskyism and Revolutionary Socialism was cleared at the convention.

Over a year and a half ago, the members of the Spartacus Youth League, and the Workers' Party had been taken into the Young People's Socialist League and the Socialist Party. It was the hope of revolutionary socialists at the time, that the decision of the Trotskyites on a world scale to enter the Socialist Parties would mean that in the United States, the Socialist Party could become the center of all revolutionaries.

Then along in the late spring of this year, the orientation of the Trotskyites changed. They decided on the creation of a separate Trotskyite Party in the United States. For months thereafter, the Party and the League was subjected to their maneuvers as they sought to leave the Party and the League and to disrupt as much as they could before leaving.

By the time of the Y.P.S.L. Convention, the Trotskyite maneuvers had brought the issue to a head. Preceding the convention by only a comparatively few days, the Trotskyites had already created in New York an organization dual to and outside the New York District of the League. In the seating of delegates the issue revolved around the question of whether the delegates of this rival and dual organization would be seated as the delegates of the New York District. When the decision was made against them, as the Trotskyites had so well planned, they withdrew from the League and created their own organization.

However, there developed in the course of the political controversy a basic understanding on the part of revolutionary socialists of the one essential difference between Trotskyism and revolutionary Socialism, and the similarity between Trotskyism and Stalinism.

Trotsky, in May, writing to a youth group in France, said, "outside the 4th International there is no historic road." Essentially this is the Stalinist concept, that there are no forces outside of the party (whether led by Trotsky or Stalin) who can lead the working class, that the salvation of the working class lies in the destruction of all working class groups but their own, and that their party has a political monopoly on the "historic road" for the working class. This essential sameness between the Stalinist and Trotskyite concept found its expression in the resolutions of the Geneva Conference for the 4th International. In these resolutions, all the defeats of the world working class are caused by "treason" of leaders. History according to the Trotskyites would have been different with an infallible leadership, i.e., Trotskyite.

Revolutionary Socialists believe that this theory of infallibility, resulting in a party that blindly follows leaders, inevitably results in dictatorship of leaders over the party and in the event of revolution, dictatorship over the proletariat instead of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Always in the writings of both Trotsky and Stalin is expressed the idea of their "giving to" the proletariat. This autocratic concept stands sharply opposed to the democratic concept of revolutionary Socialism that the workers must decide their own destiny.

While the Trotskyites, in contrast to the Stalinists, are revolutionists, their theory of leadership, infallibility, and separatism can only mean dividing rather than unifying, weakening rather than strengthening of the forces of revolutionary Socialism. Their role in relation to the Socialist Party and the Young People's Socialist League is proof of this.

Only two out of nine members of the old National Executive Committee of the League went with the Trotskyites. This ratio is approximately correct in terms of the membership. Their figures and claim to a "thousand young militants" is patently false when, immediately after the convention in New York, the strongest center of the League, the District Committee had to drop only 135 from the rolls for membership in the Trotskyite organization.

The departure of the Trotskyites left the convention

free to carry on its work. The issue in the party between reformist and revolutionary policies was decided at the convention not by factional debate, but rather by the endorsement, or rejection or modification of the political resolutions that came from the resolutions committee.

The dividing line between reformists and revolutionaries, at this period in the application of socialist theory, finds its expression on the questions of People's Frontism and War.

"The essential fallacy of People's Frontism," to quote Herbert Zam in the last issue of the Socialist Review, "is that it endeavors to substitute the struggle between ideas for the struggle between classes as the motive force in the present era of declining capitalism." People's Front is the age old policy of reformism given a new name. It is the theory that the interests of the working class in the present period when declining capitalism is taking the political form of fascism, can be better served by the collaboration of the workers with the representatives of democratic capitalism than by the development of the workers as a class.

In the United States, the issue of People's Front versus class action revolves around the course of labor in the realms of political action. The forms of People's Frontism in the United States are different from Europe but the content is the same.

There are two policies for workers' political action:

One: People's Front—the alignment of labor with elements or sections of the old capitalist parties or third capitalist political parties. (Third capitalist parties such as Fusion in New York and La Follette's Progressive Party in Wisconsin.)

Two: Labor Party—the building of a party of workers and farmers independent of and opposed to capitalist parties.

The first is the policy of leading elements in the A.F. of L. and the C.I.O.; the A.F. of L. through its old policy of "reward your friends and punish your enemies," the C.I.O. through a new version of A.F. of L. policies—the creation of Labor's Non-Partisan League and the endorsement by Labor as a bloc, of Republican and Democratic candidates. (In New York, Labor's Non-Partisan League has as its spokesman the American Labor Party which endorses Governor Lehman, Democrat, in 1936 and Mayor LaGuardia, Republican and Fusion in 1937.) Policy No. 1 is the policy of the communists, who now lean over backward in declaring loyalty to President Roosevelt. But it would be a mistake to place the blame for People's Frontism solely on the shoulders of the communists. Rather it is the policy at the present time of the C.I.O. and A.F. of L. leadership.

This policy of People's Front political action for labor is a policy that no revolutionary can support. A party which follows this policy, even if it calls itself revolutionary and socialist will no longer be either revolutionary or socialist and very soon will cease to exist at all. This policy of American People's Frontism through the form of endorsement of political candidates of capitalist parties was decisively defeated at the convention.

The policy of building a Labor Party was outlined as follows:

> "The Labor Party movement, like the struggles from which it springs, is essentially progressive. The positive value of an independent Labor Party, lies not in its program, but in its class nature and orientation. Programmatic considerations, to quote Engels, are subordinate to the basic problem of making the working class 'move as a class'. The Labor Party, even though reformist, would do what the more revolutionary organizations have thus far failed to do—that is separate the working class from the capitalist class in the political field."

Thus the programs and the records of the Gov. Earles, LaFollettes and the Mayor LaGuardias cannot be the determining factor in determining revolutionary socialist policy. Nor can the determining factor be whether labor is, or is not supporting these or other capitalist candidates. The basic concern of revolutionaries if they are to be effective and to combat People's Frontism and class collaboration in politics is to break labor "from the capitalist parties." This is impossible to accomplish if Revolutionary Socialism supports those efforts of communists, liberals and labor bureaucrats to tie labor to the old parties.

The fight against People's Frontism, in the United States, is not a negative fight, nor is it a fight that can be carried on by tailing behind moves for politcial action in the labor movement, even though they may have an American name.

This was clearly recognized by the convention:

> "Because of the political dynamics of the declining economy, there is a great danger that sentiment for an independent Labor Party may be perverted into Popular Front channels. . . . Many sections of the labor movement are moving toward the Democratic Party as an instrument for labor action. Disregarding the innate capitalist nature of the Democratic Party, and the necessity for independent action on the part of labor, these sections reconcile themselves to a liberal-labor alliance within the Democratic Party. Since, the reformist labor bureaucracy must quickly betray the logic of the essentially progressive Labor Party developments, the Socialist Party's fight for independent political action will be the most powerful weapon in the ensuing period in the struggle against American Popular Frontism."

Clearly and openly the socialist youth take their place behind the decisions of the March convention of the Socialist Party, and for the reaffirmation of these decisions at the coming convention. In New York and even in the national leadership of the party, are many comrades who while opposing People's Front in theory have condoned it in practice. The practice must and

will on the basis of convention decisions be fought by the Y.P.S.L.

The membership of the Y.P.S.L. wants a revolutionary socialist youth organization and recognizes that it cannot be that unless the party continues as a revolutionary party.

The other decisive issue in the socialist and labor movement today is war. The League endorsed the position of the March convention of the party. By convention decision, the League will oppose any attempts by any section of the party to change the present line of the Socialist Party.

The role of the Y.P.S.L. must be the application of the decisions of the convention and the party among the youth. In a resolution on the role of the Y.P.S.L., the convention said:

> "While the Y.P.S.L. functions like a party—through disciplined work in mass organizations, it does not duplicate the work of the party. The Y.P.S.L. has a field of action of its own. This is among the mass organizations of the youth. The Y.P.S.L. as the political arm of Socialism among the youth must become the leader of progressive sections of the youth, developing in an anti-capitalist direction the struggles of young people, tying these struggles into the struggles of the working class and bringing to to reality the slogan, *youth and labor unite.*"

The application of revolutionary policies in the youth field, however, depends upon a disciplined, self-sacrificing and hard working organization.

Our organizational tasks are many: the maintaining of a functioning educational department, the strengthening of the student department, the development of industrial work in cooperation with the party, the development of a Socialist Youth press, the maintaining of organizers, and an intense membership drive.

The educational work of the League is being handled by Clara Handleman and Abe Weiss. (The first educational outline of the League is obtained by writing to Clara Handleman, 21 East 17th Street, New York. The first outline is on "Reform and Revolution" by Gus Tyler. The November outline will be on "History of the Russian Labor Movement Before the Revolution.")

The press run of the first issue of the new Socialist Youth magazine, *Arise*, of 10,000, indicates the possibilities of development of a Socialist Youth press.

The chartering of three new circles since the convention in Massachusetts and Pennsylvania indicate the gains in membership that can be expected if the League settles down to the task ahead.

Student work under the direction of Alvaine Hollister and a student committee is well under way. The new line of the Y.C.L. in the American Student Union of complete and uncritical support for Roosevelt, collective security, and a policy that can only mean supporting American imperialism in a war in the Far East is lining many liberals and pacifists with the socialists.

The convention was not only concerned with the outlining of revolutionary policies but the building of an organization capable of carrying them out. With a convention delegation from sixteen international unions, and a tremendous number of mass youth organization, the future looks well for the organizational activities of the Y.P.S.L.

The organizational tasks can be carried favorably by the League; the Y.P.S.L. can be dependend upon to function as a revolutionary organization for the coming two year period, and under the leadership of a National Executive Committee elected by unanimous vote of the convention, it will throw its resources behind the political and organizational tasks of building a mass revolutionary party in the United States.

ANNOUNCING THE NEW

ARISE

National Magazine of the Young People's Socialist League

NEWS - ARTICLES - PHOTOS - STORIES - POEMS

("Life" Size — 20 pages)

This new Revolutionary Youth magazine brings to the youth of America an interesting and attractive presentation of the Marxist interpretation of current problems.

The first issue includes articles on NYA, Trotskyism, China, the American Legion and the Student Union.

JUST OUT

5c per copy **50c per year**

Order from:

ARISE

21 E. 17th ST., NEW YORK CITY

MEXICO'S ROAD TO SOCIAL REVOLUTION

by Clarence Senior

MORE than two years before the October revolution in Russia, a social revolution began to outline itself in Mexico. On January 6, 1915, Venustiano Carranza, forced to desert the capital of the country by the forces of Francisco Villa, issued a decree restoring to Indian villages the lands that had been taken from them during the Spanish conquest. In this manner he tried to rally to the Constitutionalist forces the armed groups that had been organized by Emiliano Zapata, the peasant leader, and others whose cry was "Land and Liberty".

The point at which an attempt to substitute one group of politicians for another turned from a purely political into a social revolution is thus marked.

When the Spaniards landed in 1519, in many parts of Mexico there were highly developed civilizations, largely based on communal land holdings. In the interests of the Conquistadores, the Indian governments were overthrown, the rich lands and mines seized, and the populations enslaved. Until 1810, the men of Cortes and their descendants exploited the Indians, and destroyed most of the customs and modes of the tribal societies, and sent the spoils back to the "mother country."

Naturally, the same split in interests between those engaged in local manufactures and commerce and those dependent on the home trade that had led to the demand for the independence of the thirteen colonies from Great Britain, produced the same results in Mexico. Independence, under slogans of political freedom, was demanded from the Spanish Cortes. The demands of Congressmen from the New World were for freedom of international trade, lessening of the weight of taxation from Spain, and others similar to those of the "founding fathers" of this country. Those who are remembered in Mexico today are not the commercial leaders, but the rabble-rousers Hidalgo and Morelos, who wanted independence to mean the freeing of the slaves. Both were poor priests, close to the lives of the masses. Both were excommunicated and turned over to the tender mercies of the Inquisition, which acted as executors for the colonial state. Nothing but the shift from a foreign ruling class to one composed of the sons of the original exploiters and the mestizos, product of the usual amalgamation process in colonial countries, was accomplished.

A centenary of independence was to be celebrated by Porfirio Diaz, dictator for almost forty years, when the 1910 revolution swept him off the lid which had repressed all political discussion and organization during his reign.

Francisco I. Madero, large landowner of the northern states, had been reading revolutionary literature from the United States and France. He gathered around him those who wanted political democracy to replace the personal dictatorship which was becoming so friendly to foreign capital that the popular saying was that the Mexicans themselves were stepchildren in their own home. Their signal for a political attack showed the weakness of the regime which gave in quickly. Madero was elected president after seven months of republican agitation under a provisional head after Diaz had fled to Paris.

The Madero triumph greatly strengthened two other forces which had been slowly gaining ground, the agrarian movement and the trade unions, the only concrete expression of the socialist and syndicalist agitation that had become more and more widespread since the founding of the first socialist newspaper in 1903 by a Spanish immigrant. With the entry of these two groups into activity, the issue of social change began to come to the fore.

Madero reminds one of Kerensky: he had good intentions but was unable because of his own limited outlook and knowledge of the conditions of the people, and because of his backers, to carry out the radical steps that the situation demanded. One of the outstanding economists of Mexico told me that he had heard Madero in a public speech in 1912 say "What the Mexican peasant needs is not bread but freedom!" Peasant groups thought differently. Zapata, with several thousand armed men at his back, issued a manifesto: "Be it known to Señor Madero, and through him to the rest of the world, that we will not lay down our arms until we have recovered our lands."

Madero was murdered by agents of business interests in the United States, ironically enough on Washington's birthday, 1913. Undoubtedly if he had lived another few months, there would at least have been an attempt to overthrow him, but by the radicals instead of the reactionaries.

Carranza and Obregon, two of Madero's generals, rallied all groups to oppose Victoriano Huerta, agent of U. S. imperialism. From the first it was apparent that they would break sooner or later. Carranza was personally all that his favorite phrase for himself implies, "first chief of the Revolution." Obregon was in touch with labor and socialist groups.

To win the support of the armed agrarians, Carranza issued his decree on restoration of land. To win the support of labor, he sent Obregon to meet with delegates gathered by the first central organization of labor in the country, the Casa del Obrera Mundial (The House of the Workers of the World) which had been formed in 1912. Assurances of the friendship of the Constitutionalists for labor coupled with the suppression of the Casa by Huerta won over the delegates. "Red Battalions,"

recruited from the trade unionists in the industrial centers, took the field on behalf of the Constitutionalists shortly thereafter and helped swing victory to their forces.

As the Carranza-Obregon armies consolidated their position throughout the country, the demand for a constitutional convention arose from the groups that had confederated to make their triumph possible. From the convention, held in February, 1917, in Queretaro, came the most advanced constitution in the world at that time. Three factors worked toward making the labor provisions outstanding: nationalistic feeling, the "Red Battalions," and a tradition of paternalistic legislation passed in the latter part of the XVI century to regulate practices under artisans' guilds. Since most of the industries were owned by foreigners, labor legislation became a weapon in the struggle against imperialism. In fact, this rather than labor's own power, was the principal reason for the stringency of the laws. There were only two delegates to the convention who directly represented labor, and so far as the records show they did not take part in the debates. Labor was later to regret some of the laws it hailed with such enthusiasm on the publication of the new constitution. It found that only in so far as it could make political deals or in so far as it had strength on the economic field did the laws mean anything to its members. Only since the present government was installed has it been able with any degree of success to free itself from dependence upon the politicians.

Article 123 of the 1917 constitution contains the labor provisions. The most outstanding of the items include an eight-hour day; six day week; restrictions on labor of women and children; a minimum wage; abolition of company currency; double time for overtime; compulsory schooling for workers' children with employers furnishing the schools, taught by state-selected teachers; furnishing of "comfortable and sanitary dwelling places" by employers; employers liability for accidents and occupational disease; and recognition of the right of employers and workers to resort to strikes and lockouts.

All workers groups that have registered with the government boards have a legal standing and no employer can ignore them. All employers must enter into written contracts if it is demanded of them, and the agreement must be registered legally before it becomes enforcible. The employer must collect dues for the union if so requested. Strike-breaking is declared against public policy. It is common in walking through an industrial section to see the black and red strike flag nailed across the gate of an idle factory and perhaps only one striker on guard. If anyone, worker or employer, tries to enter the factory, the police are called to evict them.

Other sections set up boards of conciliation and arbitration and give the state machinery power to decide upon the legality of a strike. The social theory of the authors of the constitution is adequately summed up in the section that defines strikes as legal if "by the employment of peaceful means they shall aim to bring about a balance between the various factors of production and to harmonize the rights of capital and labor".

Mexico's advance toward Socialism can be measured in terms of the number of times that phrase has been used as the backbone of the government's policy. Recently the idea of "an equilibrium of forces" has been giving way to the idea of the class struggle. It is still found much too frequently among the older revolutionists.

From the days of the "Red Battalions" through the reign of Calles, the unions grew by leaps and bounds. Great credit is due Luis N. Morones, first secretary of the Confederacion Regional Obrera Mexicano, for his tremendous energy, his diplomacy, and his ability to weld various disparate groups together for common advantage. When workers had trouble, Morones got the army to bring the recalcitrant employer to terms if it were necessary. Sometimes workers who didn't think much of unions were "convinced" by similar means. The C.R.O.M. jumped from 7,000 members in 1918 to 1,200,000 in 1924.

Calles, who as cabinet member had worked with labor, first with Obregon against Carranza, and then with labor against Obregon, became president in 1924. Morones became Secretary of Industry, Commerce, and Labor. Calles called himself a "labor president" and in his first message as president said, "Laborism, as a principle adopted by the national government, as an orientation of the masses, and as a system of economic, political, and social organization, has been fully established in Mexico in a new phase of its evolution". At a meeting organized by the Socialist Party, in New York City, prior to his inaugural, Calles pledged himself to further the interests of the working class.

The CROM became virtually an organ of the national government. When revolt flared again in 1924, the "red battalions" were revived and used to help Calles suppress the de la Huerta uprising. Hundreds of "labor leaders" were suddenly thrown into positions giving them more power than they had ever dreamed of. Utterly unprepared to meet their new problems, belonging to no organization that could guide and discipline them, and with the background of the vicious leadership complex that has cursed Mexico for years, the result could have been foreseen. Personal graft was rampant. The rank and file of many unions were merely pawns in the games carried on by the leaders. Substantial groups of unions that refused to go along were bullied into place or governmental force was used to destroy them. Morones, whose breadth of vision had been responsible for many advances made by labor either could not, or because he had become too deeply involved in the swing of amassing personal wealth, would not call a halt.

CROM membership skyrocketed up to an asserted 2,000,000 in 1928, the last year of Calles' term. Then,

with a change in the complexion of the government, with the exit of Morones as cabinet member, came the beginning of what most observers see as the end of the CROM. For eight years there was no nationally recognized labor federation. Various attempts to create a central body failed. The Communists had a small group. Some of its activity was financed by enemies of the CROM in order to help speed its death. Portes Gil, a reactionary who hated all trade unions, financed the distribution of Communist literture during this period. It made no headway, being confined to outsiders paying out money from the Comintern to create enough stir to be reported back so that further funds would be sent. The syndicalists also had an organization, weak and ineffectual but usable for bargaining purposes with some politicians. Various national groups maintained their own central offices, such as the railwaymen and the electricians.

In 1935, a common menace appeared on the scene which was used by the outstanding labor figure of present-day Mexico to unite most of the groups. Calles, who had been the power behind the throne, and who had grown more and more conservative, broke with the newly elected General Lazaro Cardenas, whom he had placed in nomination as his puppet. Cardenas, luckily for Mexico, turned out to have a mind of his own, and was culturally an Indian with the outlook of the agrarian revolutionaries.

Calles attacked the intention of the railwaymen to strike, and called upon Cardenas to back him up. The latter upheld the right to strike. The issue was joined between those who for years had given lip service to labor and the administration. Vicente Lombardo Toledano, once governor of Puebla, and attorney for the CROM, took the lead in organizing a united front to fight the Calles reaction. Out of this grew the Confederacion de Trajabadores de Mexico. formed in the spring of 1936. Within a year and a half, CTM has come to mean much that CROM meant in the earlier days. The leaders of the CTM are radicals, Socialists, non-party Communists, two Communists, and several militant trade unionists without much political interest. While it supports the National Revolutionary party, the state party, it seems to be well aware of the dangers attendant upon traveling the road the CROM traveled. Whether it can avoid those dangers within the frame of the labor legislation of the country, and the tradition that so thoroly permeates the labor movement of calling upon the government at every turn, remains to be seen.

The CROM has a handful of followers in the industries that were organized before it started its wild climb to the political heights, largely in the textile industry. Here and there one finds local centers of strength which are crumbling. Longshoremen on the Mexican West Coast refused to aid their brothers in the general strike on the U. S. coast, a sad commentary on the once militant internationalism of the CROM in the days when Morones was sending "labor attaches" to every important consulate just as capitalist countries send commercial attaches.

This sketchy treatment of what should be a special study for all progressive trade unionists may at least point out an obvious lesson for our labor movement. At a time when labor dependance on government under the NRA and the "little Wagner acts" is increasing, the fate of the CROM is instructive. The Communists, as part of the labor movement, have been hard to digest. Recently, thinking that they had finally gained enough converts to risk a test of strength with Lombardo Toledano, they challenged several decisions of the national council of the CTM and walked out, taking a few dissatisfied organizations with them. Lombardo is attempting, through the Workers' University of which he was founder, and through widespread workers' education, to educate the rank and file to assume responsibility in their unions. He is building up a following in this manner, and the Communists, who do not trust him, debated privately at their January convention, how soon they could get rid of him. There are powerful unions, however, which barely tolerate Communists in the federation, and while these think their general secretary is too radical, they will not go along with the disreputive maneuvers of the C. P. in an endeavor to oust him. The breach caused by the Communist walkout has been healed, although the Comintern had to send Browder from New York to read the riot act to the obstreperous comrades who didn't realize that better manners have to be used in carrying on disruption under the "new line."

Agrarian laws as advanced as the labor laws had been written into the 1917 constitution. Here, too, there was a great and hazardous distance between the "cup and the lip". It was on this field that the election of President Cardenas has shown its greatest results. Cardenas enforced the agrarian laws. During all the revolutionary years, there were distributed 17,914,982 hectares of land (2.47 acres to a hectare). This went to 1,324,759 heads of families. Of this amount, Cardenas has distributed in the 33 months of his regime, more than half, 9,764,140 hectares, to 565,216 family heads. More than half has been in the past year and is part of a speeded up program. The nature of this program is of even greater importance for the future than the mere figures themselves.

When Cardenas was nominated for president, his election was as certain as that of a Southern senator who has just won the Democratic primary. But he wasn't satisfied to sit back and wait for his friends to count the votes. He started out to take his job seriously, with much the same feeling ascribed to Lincoln and for much the same reasons seemingly—he was a "man of the people", having started to work at the age of 17, then joining an agrarian band in the revolutionary forces and working his way up by a combination of ability, fearlessness, honesty, and political shrewdness.

(*Concluded in next issue*)

Notes on International Events

The field of foreign affairs is today dominated by Great Britain, as it has been ever since the end of the World War. But Britain's foreign policy is itself undergoing a radical, if gradual change. In the last five years, the currents in British policy combatted each other. The one, represented by Stanley Baldwin and the more moderate wing of the Tories, favored a policy of conciliation to Germany and firmness toward Italy. They believed that Germany could never again be a dangerous competitor to British imperialism, and could be used as a club against France and particularly Russia. Italy on the other hand, was becoming more obstreperous; its role in the Mediterranean was on the ascendancy; in East Africa it was strengthening itself; through an alliance with France in Austria, it had entrenched itself in Central Europe; the Franco-Italian mutual assistance pact, side by side with the Franco-Russian pact, linked the three countries together in what looked very much like an anti-British-German bloc. The Baldwin policy, aimed at reducing Italy to a second—or third—rate power, culminated in the debacle of the sanctions during the invasion of Ethiopia. Sir Samuel Hoare, one of the bright lights in the Baldwin cabinet, abandoned him on this issue and was forced out. The failure of the sanctions discredited the entire Baldwin course and hastened the reorganization which put into power Neville Chamberlain, and restored Hoare to good graces.

Chamberlain together with Churchill, Hoare and the die-hard wing of the Tories, never gave up the belief that Germany was still potentially, if not actually, Britain's greatest enemy. Only Germany had the objective possibility (heavy industry, coal and iron, and electrical industry) to compete with Britain in the colonial market and on the continent. Germany's wooing of Austria, Hungary and Italy, represented an attempt to restore the pre-war triple alliance, directed against Britain. While the danger of Italy was not overlooked by these people, they saw it as a secondary one, Germany as the primary one. They wanted to follow the reverse policy of Baldwin—buy Italy, crush Germany. They believed that Italy could be pacified by a few inexpensive (to Britain) concessions, such as ceding Ethiopia. Furthermore, the winning of Italy would break the Franco-Italian pact and make France more dependent upon England, thus cancelling the Franco-Russian pact. They further argued that Baldwin's policy could never be achieved anyway, since the pacification of Germany would require enormous resources which were not available to Britain. After many years of silent struggle, what may be called the pro-Italian faction is in the saddle in England, and its policies are beginning to be noticed.

The fall of Gijon, made possible by the extensive use of Italian troops in Northern Spain, putting all Northern Spain in the hands of the rebels, gives the rebels the general advantage in Spain for the first time since the civil war broke out. This result could never have been achieved without the direct help the rebels received from Italy and Germany, and without the indirect help from England and France. It is now known that Britain has an understanding with the rebels by which its own interests, particularly the securing of iron ore, are guaranteed. Very likely, such an understanding was established in the early days of the civil war, which may explain why England permitted the setting up of an apparently hostile state on the Iberian peninsula.

Now that the non-intervention pact has ended in this miserable farce, with the "democratic" powers openly hobnobbing with the fascists, Russia has suddenly become militant, and alone of all "democratic" countries holds out against granting Franco belligerent status unless all foreign troops are withdrawn. But at the best, this "militancy" on the part of Russia can only be a gesture. After participating all along in this farce, making it possible and thus creating the illusion in the minds of the world's workers that reliance upon capital governments will help the Spanish anti-fascist struggle, Russia has no alternative but to swallow its gall and stick with England and France. That is, it has no alternative within the frame-work of its present policy. It would have one if it abandoned this policy, left the League of Nations, gave up the idea of "collective security" and placed itself in the forefront of an independent, working class, anti-imperialist struggle against war and fascism. Such a policy would really rouse the toiling masses of the world. But it is not to be expected that from the present rulers of Russia there can issue such a policy.

What has Britain in mind for Spain? This question must be asked, for the destiny of Spain will very likely be determined, under conditions of the failure of the proletarian revolution in Spain, and of proletarian solidarity outside of Spain, failure which will go down as among the blackest chapters of working class history, by British imperialism. There is growing talk that Britain will support a division of Spain into two parts; greater Spain will be given over to the fascists, Catalonia will be set up as an independent "democratic" republic. The latter is proposed as a concession to France to make the scheme palatable. The idea of another fascist country on the French frontier is so repugnant to France that England feels constrained to sugar-coat the pill in this form.

Has not enough happened to convince all true friends of Spain, all class-conscious workers, that salvation, either for the Spanish workers, or for the workers of other countries, lies only in their own efforts, and not in reliance upon "democratic" exploiters?

Many people have inquired regarding Socialist policy in the present Sino-Japanese struggle, or rather Japanese war upon China. Particularly they want to know what the Socialist attitude is toward the so-called American neutrality laws. This matter may be clarified by reference to the anti-war resolutions adopted at the Cleveland and Chicago conventions. At Cleveland the Socialist Party declared:

> "Genuine neutrality . . . is impossible for this or any other country so long as it is ruled by the profit motive. Without creating the illusion that neutrality can be achieved under capitalism, the Socialist Party will fight for the following:
>
> **Liberation of all American colonies and possessions; withdrawal of American troops from all foreign territories; no interference in the affairs of other countries, particularly Mexico, Cuba and Central and South America, either by the government or by private individuals; prohibition of the manufacture, transportation or sale of any war materials or munitions; prohibition of loans to other countries for war purposes; withdrawal of government support or guarantees on private loans to other countries for any purpose; cancellation of all war debts and indemnities; abolition of all military training for the youth.**

"Only a socialist government, however, supported by the broad masses of the workers, will be in a position to carry out such a program and therefore insure peace. The struggle against war is therefore bound up with the struggle against capitalism and for socialism."

At Chicago, the Socialist Party declared:

"No Faith in Neutrality Legislation."

"So long as there is no peace-time neutrality—since economic competition and economic penetration continue—there can be no lasting war time neutrality. As soon as an international war begins to shake the American economic empire, the United States government will move its armies into the field for defence of the imperialist structure.

"Neutrality legislation tends to shift the faith of the people to the government's peace plans. The very best that neutrality legislation can do is to halt war-time trade with belligerents and to prevent naval incidents. To the extent that this is accomplished, neutrality legislation deserves the support of all those who would delay the outbreak of war.

"Socialists, while not opposing such neutrality legislation as will hamper the early movements of the war machine, cannot place faith in the force of neutrality legislation to keep America out of war. Certain neutrality legislation, however, Socialists will oppose as injurious to the cause of the workers of the world, and, in the long run, contrary to the cause of lasting peace.

"Any embargo is reactionary and an aid to war which makes it impossible for the workers of any country to procure supplies with which to struggle against oppression. Embargo legislation in the U. S. Congress against aid for the Spanish loyalists clearly illustrates the one-sided nature of neutrality laws under a capitalist government. Likewise, an embargo directed against the Soviet Union in a war against capitalist aggressors would be equally injurious to the cause of world progress and ultimate peace."

In other words, Socialists neither expect nor demand that a capitalist government do anything to help the oppressed against the oppressors, the anti-fascists against the fascists; such demands would not only create wrong illusions among the masses, but would play into the hands of the imperialist war-mongers and their interventionist ambitions. But since workers cannot adopt an attitude of indifference in such struggles as those now going on in China and Spain, they must oppose all action by their government which would either prevent workers in America from helping their brothers abroad, or these countries to help themselves. We did not oppose the Spanish non-intervention pact on the grounds that we wanted imperialist England to help proletarian Spain, but rather on the grounds that it prevented proletarian Spain from helping itself.

Our demands as friends of the Chinese anti-imperialist struggle must therefore be: Independent working class support to the anti-Japanese struggle specifically and to the anti-imperialist struggle generally; boycott of Japanese goods; against American intervention in China; the withdrawal of all American troops and battleships from China; no restriction on the right of China to purchase war supplies in the U. S.; no restriction on the right of American citizens and groups to send supplies to China.

H. Z.

BOOKS

A GOOD CRITIQUE OF STALIN'S COURSE IN RUSSIA

"Russia Twenty Years After," by Victor Serge. (Hillman-Curl, New York, 1937. 298 pp. $2.50)

Like all of the first-class Trotskyist writings on Russia, Serge's book is an excellent critique of the present regime in the Soviet Union. More than that, it piles fact upon fact to draw an unassailable picture of a social organism which is far indeed from the ideal for which Socialists have strived and sacrificed for so many generations. Those who have accepted without question the official Soviet reports on the "progress" of the various five-year plans, of the great industrialization schemes, through which the Soviet Union would "catch up with and outstrip" the Western capitalist nations, of the big rises in real wages, of the great benefits the workers have been securing, should read Serge's reports and figures. Without necessarily accepting them as 100% gospel, they should at least serve to deflate the official data.

Serge's book has the additional value that it deals with aspects of the Russian situation most pro-Bolshevik writers ignore. He devotes a chapter to the fate of the Socialists and anarchists under Stalin. Unfortunately, he does not indicate that many of the cases he refers to began their careers as exiles, prisoners and suspects long before Stalin came into his present unchallenged power. Is Serge willing in the light of what he now knows about trials in the Soviet Union, to retrace his steps and re-evaluate the old trials against non-Bolsheviks who were also accused (and condemned) as "counter-revolutionary", as "plotters for foreign intervention", as "saboteurs"? Anything less than this is not only pure factionalism, it is pure hypocrisy. Some obscure incidents Serge brings forth add to the need for a more thorough re-examination than has so far been made. For instance, since 1926, several attempts have been made, in Moscow, Leningrad, Kharkov, to form a *Socialist Youth Movement.* Were there not similar attempts *before* 1926?

But when we turn to the purely analytical side of the book, we meet with disappointment. Many people who accept the Trotskyist critique of the Soviet regime, still reject Trotskyism as a political philosophy. For the Trotskyite analysis of, and therefore cure for, the Soviet tangle is unsatisfactory. Intelligent people cannot swallow the twin dogmas that a substitution of Trotsky for Stalin, of the Theory of Permanent Revolution for the Theory of Socialism in One Country, would bring about the millenium. Socialism in one country was presumably the father of the "right wing" course of 1923-29, marked by conciliation to Nepmen and kulaks in Russia, by the anglo-Russian unity Committee, the alliance with Chiang Kai Shek in China, support of Farmer-Laborism in the United States. It was the father of the "third period" of ultra-left lunancy of 1929-34, and now of the Peoples Front-League of Nations-Long Live Democracy-Support of Democratic Wars mania. The explanation that a "centrist bureaucracy" zig-zags from one extreme to the other to maintain its power surely does not jibe with the theory of "Thermidorian degeneration." Are Thermidorians still centrists? Or is centrism so broad that it includes the American S. P., the British I. L. P., the P. O. U. M.—and Stalin, all in one grouping?

Serge's analysis of the infamous trials of recent memory

is splendid. By tying them up with little-known events of the past and filling in some gaps, he presents a more compact and understandable portrayal than has yet appeared. But again one question remains unanswered: Why? If Serge's theory that the trials were necessary to Stalin so as to wipe out a possible "replacement crew" is true, then it follows that Stalin represents the Thermidor of the Revolution (although Serge does not specifically say so). But most of those destroyed were at one time or another placed in the Thermidorian category by—Trotsky. Further, after so many years of Thermidorian reaction, when presumably Stalin feels himself so weak that he has to eliminate a possible "replacement crew," where is the anti-Thermidorian mass movement which this "replacement crew" would serve?

Victor Serge, who does not write as an observer, but as a participant, whose authority and probity are unquestioned, has thrown much light into many obscure corners of the Russian theatre. Unfortunately, the main stage still remains dark.

—HERBERT ZAM.

HISTORICAL WRITING VERSUS HISTORICAL CLERKING?

"A History of Historical Writing," by Harry Elmer Barnes. (University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, Okla., 1937. X+434 pp. $3.50)

After attempting to set forth the training, tasks and obligations of the historian, Barnes remarks, "In the future we probably shall have to differentiate more sharply between the true historian and the record clerk who had historical pretensions.

If the book started out avowedly as a more or less critical bibliography of historians and their books during the chief periods of the last two thousand years it would then have some value, because Mr. Barnes frequently quotes or summarizes learned historical authorities and their predecessors. But this is not the case. Harry Elmer Barnes has been and still is a disciple of something vaguely called the "New History." It is so called after a book written by the late James Harvey Robinson. With him and many writers associated with him, Shotwell, Becker, Smith, Teggart and others, the New History was an attempt to broaden the base of historical analysis, to include within the purview of history not merely dynasties, diplomacy, military events and biography but also the intellectual, social and cultural patterns surrounding and embracing events.

The movement to broaden the base of study had and still has value. It irrigated, especially for American historians, many acres, which when so treated created a more fertile pasture. These writers always emphasized the causal relationship of history and the social sciences, always acknowledged the contributions of the "economic school of historical interpretation" but usually devoted most of their attention to intellectual and cultural history with much concern for the effect of science, Newtonian and Darwinian, upon events.

Now Barnes has atempted to write this book both as an application and exposition of the methods of the New History movement. It is superficial exposition that relies exclusively upon the weight of "names" and "references" which are not infrequently contradictorily handled (cf pp. 235; 259). It is hardly an application of this technique of historigraphy for it represents the cullings of a card index file of a research clerk who read some of the originals and many of the secondary accounts.

Marxists will be specially interested in the following estimate of historical materialism: "In spite of occasional exaggerations, no phase of historical interpretation has been more fruitful or epoch-making". It is a formula which "will serve fairly well" for the "period since 1500". Marxism and Fascism will contend for world supremacy in which the former will succeed. Both are "hurrying the world towards an intellectual abyss".

These remarks, several out of a total of 8 references to either Marx or the thesis of "economic determinism" in history, are typical of the general superficiality of the book.

FRANK N. TRAGER

A NEW PUBLICATION ON SPAIN APPEARS SHORTLY

What is really happening inside Spain will be covered in a new weekly press service, *Spanish Labor News,* issued by Labor Research Front. Most of the news now coming from war-torn Spain covers military movements; we get too little information on the political and economic developments which will really determine the course of the war.

To furnish this news, Labor Research Front will digest newspapers, magazines, press releases, and published documents issued by all of the factions in Spain. In addition, private letters from observers in Spain and reports of visitors to the country will be used. Information culled from all these sources will be boiled down to essentials and published in the weekly issue of *Spanish Labor News,* which will be published at 21 East 17th Street, New York City.

In issuing the *Spanish Labor News,* Labor Research Front is entering another field of research in topics of vital interest to labor and the Socialist movement. The Front already carries on investigations in economic trends, industrial surveys, and the laws affecting labor. It handles research for the Socialist Call, and the Socialist Party, as well as requests for information from trade unions and individuals.

BOOKS RECEIVED

America's Sixty Families. By Ferdinand Lundberg. New York, the Vanguard Press. $3.75.

Peaceful Change—the Alternative to War. By Wm. T. Stone and Clark M. Eichelberger. New York, Foreign Policy Association. 35¢.

World Production and Prices, 1936-37. League of Nations Economic Intelligence Service. New York, Columbia University Press. $1.25.

World Economic Survey, 1936-37. League of Nations Economic Intelligence Service. New York, Columbia University Press. $1.50.

The Italian Invasion of Spain. Official Documents and Papers Seized from Italian Units in Action in Guadalajara. Washington, D.C., the Spanish Embassy.

Due to transmission difficulties, the Caballero statement had to be omitted till the next issue.

Announcing the NEW

PARTISAN REVIEW

A LITERARY MONTHLY

Independent and experimental; free of connections with any political party or group; providing a forum for the discussion of critical problems and for new tendencies in creative writing.

IN THE DECEMBER ISSUE:

EDMUND WILSON: Flaubert's Politics.
A long essay on the social ideas behind the novels of Flaubert.

JAMES T. FARRELL:
Mrs. O'Flaherty and Lizz, a story.
Continuing the narrative of the O'Neills and the O'Flahertys, begun in *A World I Never Made.*

PABLO PICASSO:
Dreams and Lies of General Franco, etchings.
The first examples of politically-inspired art from the hand of the great Spanish cubist.

SIDNEY HOOK:
The Technique of Mystification.
A leading American Marxist discusses the philosophy of Kenneth Burke.

DWIGHT MACDONALD: "The New Yorker".
The class attitudes behind the humor of sophistication, analyzed by the author of the *Nation* articles on *Time* and *Fortune.*

LIONEL ABEL:
Problems of the Revolutionary Saint.
A study of the novelist, Ignazio Silone.

Poems by Wallace Stevens, James Agee and others.

Reviews by William Troy, Philip Rahv, Mary McCarthy and others.

Theater . . Movies . . Editorials , , Communications.

25 cents a copy $2.00 a year

Edited by: F. W. Dupee, Dwight Macdonald, Mary McCarthy, George L. K. Morris, William Phillips, Philip Rahv.

PARTISAN REVIEW
22 East 17th Street, New York, N. Y.

Enclosed find $2.00. Please send me Partisan Review for 12 issues, beginning December, 1937.

NAME.....

STREET.....

CITY.....STATE.....

THE MARXIST QUARTERLY

in its Winter Issue presents:

THE PRINCIPLES OF MARXISM, A Restatement
by Karl Korsch

BACKGROUND OF THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR
by Bertram D. Wolfe

THE RAILROAD STRIKES OF 1885-86
by Harry Frumerman

CHANGING NATURE OF MONOPOLY CAPITALISM
by G. Reimann

BETWEEN WAR AND SOCIALISM
by Bernhard Buchholz

THE SOCIOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE
by Sidney Hook

MR. HOGBEN AGAINST MATHEMATICS
by William Gruen

SYNTHESIS IN ART INVESTIGATION
by Leo Balet

METAPHYSICS FOR THE MOVIES
by Meyer Schapiro

DR. JOHNSON AND THE OLD ORDER
by Stuart G. Brown

THE CLASS NATURE OF SCIENCE
by Eliseo Vivas

Communications and reviews by Edward Conze, Jim Cork, Meyer Schapiro, Harry Levin, B. D. Wolfe, and others.

Free from dogma, dictation or partisan restrictions, with no limitation of subject or contributors save those of relevance, expertness and illumination, the Marxist Quarterly is the only serious journal of independent Marxism in America. Its first two numbers have won for it instant recognition. The present number continues and even betters the pace set by the first two.

$2.00 brings it for an entire year (four numbers); Single copies 50c; a few copies of Nos. 1 and 2 still available.

SUBSCRIBE NOW

MARXIST QUARTERLY 20 VESEY ST., N. Y. C.